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Masons Island Preserve Dedicated on April 21

ON THE EVE OF EARTH DAY'S 26TH ANNIVERSARY, The Nature Conservancy dedicated a new preserve and remembered the generous donors who made it possible.

The Connecticut Chapter's Masons Island Preserve in Mystic, created last November, includes a 47-acre conservation easement on valuable, buildable waterfront property.

The late Jess and Marguerite Adkins, who lived on Masons Island, made the \$100,000 purchase of the land and easement possible through a bequest. More than 180 people attended the dedication on April 21. During the dedication, the chapter unveiled a stone engraved with the words "Jess & Marguerite Adkins, Masons Island Preserve, The Nature Conservancy, 1995" on the 0.29-acre parcel it owns.

The area provides habitat for a variety of migratory birds, including nesting osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), which is listed as a species of special concern in Connecticut. During the dedication ceremony, the cries of an osprey could be heard in the distance.

"This stone will serve as a reminder to everyone of the generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Adkins," said Chapter Director of Land Protection Carolie Evans. "I like to think of one of our

children's children seeing an osprey soaring overhead, and knowing they are still found in Connecticut thanks in part to people like the Adkins."

Dawn Knipe, who worked with Jess Adkins at Pace University in New York City, unveiled the stone with Carolie Evans. "He thought this place was a refuge not just for wildlife but a refuge of the spirit," she said of Adkins. "It

was his refuge. Here he was Prospero on an enchanted island."

Dr. Robert Askins, chair of the zoology department at Connecticut College and a trustee of the Connecticut Chapter, said salt marshes such as the ones on Masons Island not only support "salt marsh specialist" species such as the willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*) and the clapper rail, but also help sustain the productivity and biological diversity of offshore waters. For example, killifish feed on small snails in the saltmarsh, and in

turn provide food for larger fish and water birds. Killifish, one of the most abundant small fish, also lay their eggs in saltmarshes.

The chapter purchased the 0.29-acre waterfront parcel and a 47-acre conservation easement in the center of the island from the Masons Island Company.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)



TEN YEARS OF CONSERVATION AND FRIENDSHIP

A Farewell

"Nothing endures but change." Accepting those words, we must make change our ally, and embrace the new opportunities and pathways it offers.

Such a time has come for me. After ten years at The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter, I will soon be leaving, having accepted the position of executive director of the Conservancy's Arizona Chapter. I begin my duties there in early July.

I am honored to have been offered this assignment, and look forward to meeting the many new challenges it will offer; I am especially thrilled to continue as a part of The Nature Conservancy, which I consider to be the world's most effective conservation group. This kind of staff "cross-pollination" is a healthy policy that has provided the Conservancy with a network of resourceful and versatile management nationally and internationally.

I am proud to take the experience I gained as a conservationist in Connecticut to another corner of the country. The Arizona Chapter, which is celebrating its 30th year, has a strong record and an energetic network of trustees, members and staff, from which I hope to learn much.

Nonetheless, this is a bittersweet moment, combining the excitement of a new environment, home and job with the sadness of leaving Connecticut. Bonnie and I have spent many happy and productive years here, raised a family, and made a multitude of friends.

I cannot imagine a graceful way to say goodbye to you all — more than 17,000 friends, professional colleagues and members of the Connecticut Chapter. From my first memorable day with the chapter at the 1986 annual meeting at White's Flower Farm in Litchfield, I have enjoyed the most exciting and rewarding years of my career. I will truly miss my association with every one of you.

I hope you will join me in reflecting on everything we've worked on together here in Connecticut. With your help, The Nature Conservancy Connecticut

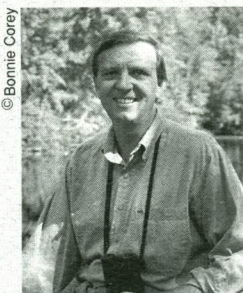
Chapter has grown to one of this organization's strongest state programs, and today is a leading force for conservation. We have protected thousands of acres of habitat, cared for it through a first-rate stewardship program, engaged many partners in our work, are constantly gathering new information through a well-established research program, and have reached out to extend our support for international conservation.

The chapter's strength emanates from the commitment and passion of its members to the ever increasing need to protect and manage Connecticut's wild lands for the future.

Although I confess to some regrets about leaving New England, my home of more than 46 years, doubts about the viability of the Connecticut Chapter are not among them; I am confident it will continue to grow and thrive in my absence. Moreover, the chapter's innovative and highly motivated board and staff look forward to working with a new leader with vision and ideas that will prepare it for conservation in the 21st century. Vital organizations like the Conservancy need and deserve periodic infusions of new ideas and leadership.

I will truly miss Connecticut, and plan to come back often. Please accept my heartfelt thanks and appreciation for your loyalty and support during the past decade. The friendship and trust you so generously extended to me and my family have made this a happy and productive time. I have genuinely enjoyed working with you, and hope to make friends as fine as you in my new home.

— LES COREY
Vice President
and Executive
Director



© Bonnie Corey

Northeast Utilities Hosts Land Trust Convocation



© John Mathiasen

Northeast Utilities hosted a gathering of 160 volunteer land trust directors at its Berlin headquarters for the 13th annual Land Trust Service Bureau Convocation on Saturday, February 24. The Service Bureau recognized the achievements of individual land trusts with special awards:

The Stewardship Challenge Awards went to the Farmington Land Trust for its memorial preserve dedications and the Salisbury Association Land Trust Committee for establishing an official policy regarding the need for stewardship endowments to help care for conservation easements held by the land trust.

The Partnerships Challenge Award went to Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust for initiating a partnership between the trust, the state Department of Environmental Protection, and the local community to protect the Windham Bog.

The Communications Challenge Award went to the Cheshire Land Trust for publishing "Trails," a guide for the town of Cheshire.

The Resources Challenge Award was given to the Clinton Land Trust for doubling its membership.

The Protection Challenge Award was granted to the Norfolk Land Trust for protecting 359 acres with conservation easements since November of 1994.

Carolee Evans received a special tribute to acknowledge the many years of fine service she has given to the land trusts across the state as she steps down from directing the Land Trust Service Bureau. — LESLEY OLSEN

Above: Leonard Seeber, president of the Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust accepts the Partnerships Challenge Award from Carolee Evans (center) and Lesley Olsen (left), past and present directors, respectively, of the Land Trust Service Bureau.

Masons Island

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

© John Matthiessen



On the cover:
Nesting osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), are among the species found at the Masons Island Preserve.

Left top:
After the dedication of the Masons Island Preserve, local residents and friends of the chapter admired the easement property as an osprey soared overhead.

Brothers Rufus Allyn of Mystic and Louis P. Allyn of North Grafton, Mass., the principals of the company, agreed to put the property into permanent conservation protection at far less than its fair market value.

The Nature Conservancy will finance this purchase with partial use of a \$500,000 bequest from the estate of Jess T. Adkins, who died in 1988. Adkins willed these funds to the Conservancy for protecting coastal land in eastern Connecticut.

The Conservancy will use another \$100,000 from the bequest to create a stewardship endowment for the new preserve. Jeffrey C. Hahner of Westport, the executor of the Adkins' estate, has agreed that the Conservancy may keep the remainder of the bequest in a capital reserve fund in memory of the Adkins for future projects in the area.

A conservation easement — in Connecticut called a conservation restriction — is a legal agreement a property owner makes to restrict the type and amount of development that may take place on a specific piece of property.

As the roads on Masons Island are private, public access to the property will not be available. 🌿

— JOHN MATTHIESSEN



Left center:
Dawn Knipe helps unveil the stone, with its dedication to the Adkins, at the Masons Island Preserve.

Below left:
The granite stone for the Masons Island Preserve is loaded into a truck in March.



The Nature Conservancy At Work

	Worldwide	Connecticut
Total Transactions:	17,341	658
Total Acres Protected:	9,034,000	20,845
Total Acres Registered:	465,000	6,018
Total Acres Saved:	9,499,000	26,863
Members:	829,734	17,752
Corporate Associates:	1,645	30

Conservation Easements Protect 75 Acres on Beaver Brook

© Lesley Olsen



▲ J. Melvin Woody, Cynthia C. and George J. Willauer.

Wish List

Chapter members have been very generous in lending and donating useful items to us. Any in-kind donation is tax-deductible. One of our current needs is a paper shredder. Please contact Helene Fenger at the Connecticut Chapter office, (860) 344-0716.

George J. and Cynthia C. Willauer and J. Melvin Woody of Lyme and Marilyn L. Schmitt of Los Angeles have generously donated conservation easements on their adjacent properties in Lyme.

The mostly wooded properties total 75 acres. They are located along Beaver Brook, a tributary of the Eightmile River, which meets the Connecticut River at Hamburg Cove, one of 17 core sites in the Tidelands of the Connecticut River region.

The properties back onto the Nehantic State Forest and are bounded to the west by land owned by the Lyme Land Conservation Trust. To the east, the properties are bounded by land under a conservation easement donated last year by the Willaurs to the land trust; although that property has since been sold to new owners, the easement remains permanently in effect. The new easements bring the total contiguous protected land in the immediate area to more than 1,400 acres.

"When we all bought this property 25 years ago, we agreed among ourselves to keep it open and preserve the woodlands, meadow, and stream," said Melvin Woody. "Ten years ago we began to talk about how to perpetuate these agreements. The Nature Conservancy and the Lyme Land Conservation Trust have helped us design easements that will protect the beauty of this place forever. We're gratified to know that

future generations will be able to enjoy what we have loved."

The three new conservation easements are a departure from the Conservancy's typical "hands-off" easement used to protect rare and endangered species. The easements allow for the continuation of traditional New England activities, such as limited agriculture, forest management, and wildlife management, while protecting wetlands by requiring buffers — areas around the wetlands where these activities will not take place. The easements preclude any further development.

This new approach is appropriate in areas where rare and endangered species are not present and the overall health of the ecological system is not threatened by compatible human use. The Conservancy is exploring the use of more flexible easements in buffer areas in the Tidelands region.

"The foresight of these landowners stands as an example of how to protect important landscapes long-term, while keeping the land in productive private ownership and on the tax rolls," said Chapter Executive Director Leslie N. Corey Jr.

The Conservancy will manage the easements with the assistance of the Lyme Land Conservation Trust, which also manages the Conservancy's Pleasant Valley Preserve just down the Eightmile River from the new properties. 🌿

— LESLEY OLSEN

Friend of Chapter Leaves \$400,000 Bequest

Kenneth E. Dowd had been a loyal Acorn donor for many years, but the fact that he had designated a major bequest to the Conservancy was not known until after his death in the fall of 1995.

The approximately \$400,000 he left to the Connecticut Chapter in his will was for unrestricted use, and it will be applied toward land protection projects across the state. It is the second largest bequest in the chapter's history.

Kenneth Dowd lived in North Haven and built houses as a carpenter for his own construction company. A veteran of World War II, his hobbies included golfing, refinishing furniture and caning chairs. He and his wife, who passed away in 1980, had no children.

He divided his residual estate equally between The Nature Conservancy Connecticut Chapter, the National Audubon Society, the Connecticut Audubon Society and the National Wildlife Federation.

"Kenneth Dowd was a private person, concerned with preserving open space and the protection of land and its natural resources," said Stearns J. Bryant Jr. of New Haven, his attorney and executor. "His legacy to these environmental groups was an expression of his deep commitment to conservation." 🌿

— CAROL KIMBALL



Partnership Works for Milford Point Restoration



© Robert Perron

Last year, The Nature Conservancy awarded \$10,000 to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) toward enhancing beach habitat for wildlife at Milford Point in Milford, which is part of the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge.

The Conservancy protected Milford Point in 1986 and turned it over to the USFWS for management. Milford Point itself is a 10-acre barrier beach, protecting 850 acres of salt marsh at the mouth of the Housatonic River from the effects of storms and tides. This system of beaches, dunes, and tidal wetlands is a premier wildlife area in Connecticut.

Adjacent to the refuge are five acres of state-owned beach, one of the few active nesting sites in Connecticut for the federally threatened piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) and the least tern (*Sterna antillarum*), a threatened species in the state. With nesting by both species recorded at the point as recently as 1983, the USFWS project aims to reestablish the nesting potential of the site. Unfortunately, the point has been degraded over the years by the dumping of dredge spoils from the Housatonic River and the levelling of dunes for development.

The USFWS formed a partnership with The Nature Conservancy, the Connecticut Audubon Society and the state Department

of Environmental Protection to study the natural resources and history of Milford Point and design a plan for its restoration. Working for USFWS, field researcher Bill Root inventoried the plant and animal life of the area, collected soil samples and mapped its topography and habitat types in the spring and summer of 1995 with the assistance of Carolyn Alling and Diana Paine, graduate students at Southern Connecticut State University.

This research yielded a list of proposed management alternatives, ranging from minor vegetation manipulation to dune construction. In the coming months, the USFWS will be working with the Conservancy and its other partners to begin removal of non-native vegetation. By the fall of 1996, the USFWS expects to have the permits and equipment it needs for more intensive management efforts.

The active nest sites and good quality intertidal feeding areas hold the potential for attracting plovers and terns back to Milford Point. This project presents an opportunity to increase our knowledge of enhancing habitat for shorebirds and terns and will provide land managers with useful information for designing future barrier beach restoration projects. 🌿

— DAVE GUMBART

East Haddam House Donated to Chapter

In December, long-time member Marilyn J. Conklin of East Haddam donated to The Nature Conservancy her home and ten acres of land. The chapter already held a conservation easement on the property, which adjoins the Burnham Brook Preserve. The gift, valued at \$165,000, includes a provision for Marilyn to continue to live in her home for her lifetime.

A retired physical education teacher who was a faculty member at Connecticut College for 35 years, Marilyn coached field hockey and basketball and taught fencing and riding. Now a double amputee, she is learning to ride again, participating in the therapeutic riding program at High Hopes in Old Lyme. She also raises basset hounds and is an active volunteer for several organizations, including the Norma Terris National Humane Education Center in East Haddam, which teaches children throughout the country about the humane treatment of animals and the environment.

Marilyn purchased her property in 1976 from Dr. Richard H. Goodwin, one of the original founders of the Connecticut Chapter. Dr. Goodwin, the prime force behind the creation of the Burnham Brook Preserve, has made significant donations toward its preservation, and helped inspire Marilyn Conklin's generous donation.

Burnham Brook Preserve, named after a cold, fast-moving stream that empties into the Eightmile River, is one of the 17 core sites in the Conservancy's Tidelands of the Connecticut River, one of the "Last Great Places." The preserve is especially important to "forest interior" birds that winter in the tropics and require large, contiguous northern forests for breeding and nesting. The Burnham Brook Preserve guarantees the protection of hundreds of acres of forest habitat for these birds, whose northern breeding and tropical wintering grounds are threatened. Because of this natural diversity, The Nature Conservancy and Connecticut College have entered into an agreement — which will be enhanced by this donation — that facilitates the preserve's use for field research and education.

"To make such a long-term gift — especially of the home she built and the land she loves — is truly a commitment beyond measure," said Chapter Executive Director Leslie N. Corey. "This is an illustration of how a person of generosity and vision can make an impact on conservation far into the future."



— CAROL KIMBALL

The Great Pond Mystery

A hydrological enigma, the rising and falling waters of Glastonbury's Great Pond have baffled local nature buffs for years. The pond's brimming spring floods

create a haven for peepers, ducks, and dragonflies, and its dry August mudflats give rise to a carpet of uncommon wildflowers and grasses. Yet, although it is within a third of a mile of the Connecticut River, these changes do not correspond directly to the river's level.

With its puzzling hydrology and distinctive assemblage of rare species, Great Pond is like few other water bodies in New England. The Connecticut Chapter recognized its exceptional value by signing a management agreement with the Balf Company and the town of Glastonbury in 1991.

Over the past two years, the chapter funded the research of Dr. Robert Thorson, a University of Connecticut hydrologist determined to unravel the Great Pond mystery. "I've never seen a pond

like it," Thorson said. "It seems that human disturbance was instrumental in altering the modern conditions at the pond. It's a fascinating interplay of human history and the environment."

Thorson used both high-tech and low-tech methods to piece together the natural and human histories of the pond.

On the high-tech side, Thorson used radiocarbon dating to trace the history of the pond to its glacial origins more than 14,000 years ago, the oldest date yet determined for a pond in Connecticut. His hydrograph (see photo) and groundwater wells tracked daily and seasonal fluctuations for nearly a year.

On the low-tech side, his conversations with local residents and reviews of town history deduced former hydrologic trends from a variety of facts. The pond was at various times a swimming hole, a source for block ice, a cattle pasture, a hayfield, and a rifle range. Its outlet stream — now a trickle during the summer — was once swift enough to support a sawmill.

While the data analysis is not yet complete, Thorson has arrived at a few conclusions. First, it seems that the pond's long-term fluctuations closely correlate with regional climate; higher in cool, wet years, and lower in hot, dry years.

Second, it is clear that surface water flows (i.e., summer storm flow from the incoming Grindle Brook) have little to no effect on the pond's level. In contrast, most of the pond's water actually filters upward through the underlying "stratified drift" — a deep bed of course-grained, porous sediment that allows unrestricted flow of groundwater. In other words, the level of Great Pond corresponds directly with the local water table, completely independent from the level of the great river flowing nearby.

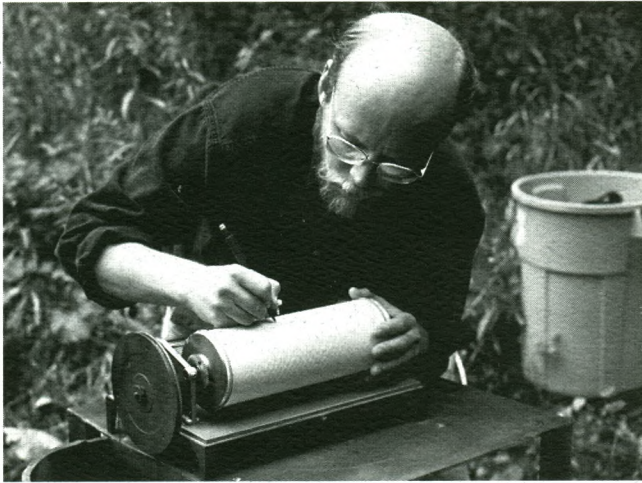
Soil in the area is so leaky that under normal conditions Grindle Brook actually loses surface water as it makes its way downhill toward Great Pond. This filtered water later resurfaces as it reaches the flat, exposed groundwater table at Great Pond.

Perhaps most interesting, Thorson found that the area's agricultural history has had a profound impact on the maintenance of groundwater flow at the pond. At one point, in an effort to straighten Grindle Brook, it was channelled, causing increased erosion and the build-up of a broad gravel and sand delta where it meets Great Pond. This porous delta allows drainage and aeration, filters out finer sediments, and perpetuates the filtering capacity of the pond, accounting for the pond's relatively clear, clean water.

"The farmer upstream did something that was originally bad," said Thorson, "But which turned out okay." 🌿

— ANDY CUTKO

© Judy Preston



© H. William Reed



▲ Above top:
Dr. Robert Thorson works with his
hydrograph.

Above:
Great Pond, Glastonbury.

Big Forest, Healthy Forest

Dr. Askins Discusses Forests and Neotropical Migrants with Charter Oak Council

Maintaining large tracts of forest in Connecticut is the best way to keep the state's forests healthy, Dr. Robert Askins told a gathering of Charter Oak Council members at a lunchtime talk on April 16.

Dr. Askins, chair of the zoology department at Connecticut College in New London, specializes in neotropical migrant birds — birds that migrate to the tropical regions of the New World part of the year. Of the songbirds found in New England, 70 to 80 percent spend part of the year in the tropical regions of the Americas. These species, many of which nest in Connecticut, act as a natural pesticide, the chapter trustee told the gathering.

Census data shows that these birds are declining in both overall numbers and in diversity. Dr. Askins believes the cause is forest fragmentation: the gradual division of forests into smaller and smaller parcels. Edge species such as raccoons, skunks, cats and crows, which prey upon the eggs and nestlings of these birds, will venture 100 yards into a forest area. As the size of forest plots drops, the area outside their reach dwindles, and finally disappears, leaving no safe breeding area. Consequently, certain species of migrants simply avoid smaller plots; studies have shown that the cerulean warbler is never found in plots with less than 1,600 contiguous acres.

The diversity of species among the birds is essential to the health of the forest, because the various species eat different kinds of insects in different parts of the forest, or even at different levels of the same tree. For example the black-throated green warbler feeds from the forest "canopy" (the layer of branches and leaves visible overhead when you walk in the woods); the American redstart feeds from the lower canopy, the cerulean warbler from the high canopy. The ovenbird feeds on the forest floor; the black and white warbler pulls spiders, grubs and other insects from the bark of trees; and the worm-eating warbler eats mainly in the shrub layer, gleaning insects from leaves.

Studies have shown that forest areas deprived of these birds and their vigorous feeding are likely to suffer an outbreak of leaf-eating insects every 3 to 4 years, com-

pared with the natural 25 to 30 year cycle. Such outbreaks are known to stunt the growth of trees. This can be particularly harmful to a state like Connecticut, because most of its forests are in some phase of succession; 80 percent of Connecticut was cleared for farming and other activities by the 1830s.

To have healthy forests in Connecticut, it is therefore vital to protect them not simply in terms of aggregate acreage statewide, but in sizable plots of 1,000 acres or more, Dr. Askins concluded. He cited areas such as the Conservancy's Burnham Brook Preserve and Devil's Hopyard State Park, which total more than 1,700 acres of protected land in East Haddam and Salem.

Dr. Askins was the last in a series of speakers at lunchtime talks for the chapter's Charter Oak Council, which includes members who make an annual unrestricted gift of \$1,000 or more. The Charter Oak Council helps the chapter by providing critical discretionary funds. The other speakers were chapter Stewardship Ecologist Andy Cutko and Ron Mills and Lass Dudley on conservation and horse packing in Montana; and Dr. Juliana Barrett, Geoffrey C. Hughes Director of the Tidelands of the Connecticut River Program.

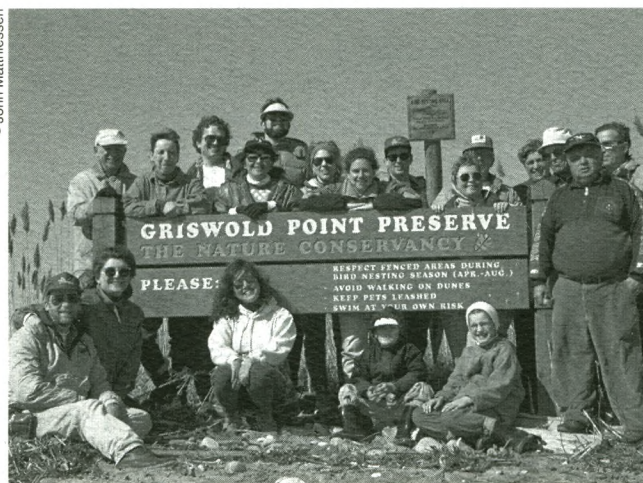
Please consider joining the Charter Oak Council and participating in the next series. For information, please call Marian Moore at (860) 344-0716. 🌿



© John Matthiessen

▲ Dr. Robert Askins.

© John Matthiessen



◀ This year's Griswold Point work part volunteers, who protected the nesting area of the threatened piping plover.

Panama Journey an Enlightening Adventure

Anonymous Gift Funds ANCON Project

Thanks to a long-time Nature Conservancy supporter from Connecticut, Panama's National Association for the Conservation of Nature (ANCON), has received a huge boost in its efforts to protect that country's Darien National Park.

The donor, who has assisted the chapter's initiatives in the Tidelands of the Connecticut River and other parts of the state, recently contributed \$75,000 to ANCON, which will enable the organization to establish a new office and education center near several communities bordering the northern edge of the park.

The Darien National Park, at 1.5 million acres, is half the size of Connecticut, and is one of the most pristine and important wildlife habitats in this hemisphere. It is home to 131 mammal species and 450 bird species and to two indigenous groups, the Kuna and the Embera, who have maintained traditional forest lifestyles despite centuries of contact with Europeans.

ANCON will work out of its new center with local residents and crop and cattle farmers to develop new, more environmentally-compatible agricultural techniques, reforestation programs, and watershed protection initiatives. The isolation and inaccessibility of many parts of the park and its surrounding communities makes strategically-placed centers essential to the protection of the park and its wildlife. 🌿

— DAVID SUTHERLAND

Los puercos, los puercos!" urgently whispered Emiliano, a five-year-old Embera Indian boy, as he led us to the edge of a clearing where 200 white-lipped peccaries were noisily grazing. The wild pigs' commotion momentarily drove away the blue and yellow macaws and chestnut-mandibled toucans that normally squawked in the branches above.

Emiliano's parents work at Cana, a camp administered by the Association Nacional para la Conservacion de la Naturaleza (ANCON) deep inside Panama's Darien National Park. In February, fifteen members, friends, and staff of the Connecticut Chapter were hosted by ANCON at Cana and at Bocas del Toro, an island off Panama's Caribbean coast in the Bastimentos National Park.

The site of the world's largest gold mine during the 1700s and 1800s, Cana was abandoned at the beginning of this century, in part due to the difficulty of operating a mine in such forbidding terrain and climate. Today, rusted iron works and industrial equipment enshrouded by dense rainforest are the only evidence of Cana's past. Talk of reviving the mining operation in the 1980s compelled ANCON to purchase the mining concession in order to preserve what is now one of this hemisphere's wildest and most remote wildlife preserves.

▶
Emiliano, an Embera resident of ANCON's Cana Center in the Darien National Park, helps his mother craft a basket for Lynn Savitsky of Wilton, one of the Connecticut Chapter members who traveled to Panama in February.

Our group had boarded a small plane at the nearest town's airline "terminal" — a 12-foot by 12-foot waist-high concrete wall — and flown over many miles of unbroken rainforest to arrive at Cana's grass airstrip. The immense area of pristine forest, in which Cana is one of the few interruptions, renders this connecting point between North and South America vital for a staggering array of wildlife.

ANCON's acquisition of the mining concession is symbolic of the multi-faceted approach it has taken to preserve critical habitats. During visits to a Guaymí native village, the Panama Canal, and a remote Caribbean island, the Connecticut group not only saw dozens of bird species, but also ANCON's initiatives for establishing model farms that demonstrate environmentally-sustainable agricultural techniques, maintaining meaningful protection of designated park areas, and educating local residents about the importance of resource preservation.

For information on future chapter trips to Panama, please call David Sutherland at (860) 344-0716. 🌿

— DAVID SUTHERLAND



© Susan Suhanovsky



Les Corey Receives "One Conservancy" Award

Leslie N. Corey Jr., center, receives the One Conservancy Award from Board of Governor and Connecticut Chapter Board Member Anthony P. Grassi, left, and Chief Conservation Officer Bruce Runnels at the Board of Governors meeting in Arlington, Va. on March 14. The One Conservancy Award is the highest honor The Nature Conservancy bestows upon its employees, and was given to Corey in recognition of his ten years of outstanding service.

1996 Natural History Walks Program

Come join us as we explore some of the most beautiful wild places in Connecticut. The chapter's Natural History Walks are fun and informative — geared toward providing a comfortable learning experience while also finding great places to walk and canoe. You'll learn about natural history and the ecology of the Tidelands of the Connecticut River, one of the "Last Great Places."

Because we wish to provide a high quality experience, participation is limited, and reservations are required. Please be considerate; if you must cancel, give us a call so we can contact those on our waiting list. For information and to register, please contact Jean Cox at (860) 344-0716. We will mail you a map and other information shortly before the walk. All walks are rain or shine. Please, no pets.

Saturday, June 8, 10 a.m. to noon
Wildflowers at Haddam Meadows, Haddam
 Join chapter Biological Monitoring Specialist Beth Lapin for a relaxing stroll through the meadows to learn how to identify spring wildflowers. A copy of "Newcomb's Wildflower Guide," sunscreen, water, and bug protection are strongly recommended. Come enjoy the spring beauty of wildflowers along the banks of the Connecticut River. Limited to 12 participants.

Thursday, July 11, 10 a.m. to noon
Tidelands Canoeing, Great Island Marshes, Old Lyme
 Come explore this beautiful area with chapter Director of Science and Stewardship Judy Preston and Dr. Juliana Barrett, who is the Geoffrey C. Hughes director of the Tidelands of the Connecticut River Program. We will talk about what makes this such a dynamic area, the threats it faces, and stewardship of this precious resource.
NOTE: In addition to providing your own boat and a personal flotation device for each passenger, you are responsible for a nominal parking fee at the state boat launch site. Limited to ten boats.

Saturday, July 13, 10 a.m. to noon
The Life, Death, and Rebirth of an Old Growth Forest
Cathedral Pines, Cornwall
 A testament to the power of localized tornadoes awaits a visitor to the Cathedral Pines Preserve. In just ten minutes in July 1989, three funnel clouds changed the course of Connecticut's largest stand of old growth pine and hemlock trees. Far from finding it discouraging, ecologists seek out this site to better understand a forest's regrowth and rejuvenation. Please join Judy Preston on a short walk of moderate difficulty to see the blowdown and learn more about the history of this site. Limited to 20 participants.

Thursday, Aug. 8, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Tidelands Canoeing, Salmon Cove, East Haddam
 Join Judy Preston and Dr. Juliana Barrett for a leisurely paddle at another of our important Tidelands sites. It is home to two species of inver-

tebrates and four plant species of special concern in Connecticut. In addition to enjoying the beautiful scenery and abundant birdlife, we'll talk about this important site and how it fits into the Tidelands program.

NOTE: In addition to providing your own boat and a personal flotation device for each passenger, you will be responsible for a nominal parking fee at the state boat launch site. Limited to 10 boats. Please bring a lunch.

Saturday, Aug. 17, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Selden Creek Canoe/Kayak Excursion, Lyme
 One of the Connecticut River's most scenic trips! Come join chapter Stewardship Ecologist Andy Cutko and Tom Maloney, River Steward with the Connecticut River Watershed Council, on a tour of Selden Creek, where we will canoe through one of the state's most pristine freshwater tidal marshes.

NOTE: In addition to providing your own boat and a personal flotation device for each passenger, you will be responsible for a nominal parking fee at the launch site. Limited to 10 boats. This is a six-mile round trip and the Selden Creek area can have strong currents and wind. Please, canoeists with at least intermediate skills only. Please bring lunch.

Saturday, Sept. 21, 10 a.m. to noon
Hollenbeck Preserve, Canaan
 Please join Chris Wood for an excursion in the lovely northwest highlands of Connecticut at our newest preserve. This exemplary and highly diverse forested swamp is a patchwork of habitats and presents an intriguing array of unique species. Open fields replete with birds, forested swamp, and a meandering river add to its beauty. The terrain is flat and the walking will be easy. Limited to 20 participants.

Saturday, Oct. 12, 10 a.m. to noon
Ayers Gap, Franklin
 Please join Judy Preston and Network Coordinator Carol Krupa as we explore the natural history of this quiet, lovely eastern Connecticut preserve and enjoy a moderately challenging walk. The trail climbs a brief, steep incline to a rock outcropping overlooking the countryside, then levels off and travels through a quiet hemlock forest. The real treat is a cascading waterfall at the trail's end. Light hiking boots and water are recommended. Limited to 20 participants.



©Harold E. Malde

Great Island Marshes, Old Lyme.

For more information on ...

... work parties, please call Marlene Kopcha or David Gumbart at (860) 344-0716. Some work parties are for a limited number of participants.

... Devil's Den or Katharine Ordway preserves in Weston, please call (203) 226-4991.

... Sunny Valley Preserve in New Milford and Bridgewater, please call (203) 355-3716.

Trails Day Hike

Sunny Valley, Bridgewater

Saturday, June 1, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Joan Tait, Sunny Valley Preserve Advisory Committee and long-time Appalachian Mountain Club member, will lead this hike through the trails in the hills along the Housatonic River.

Watercolor Landscape Demonstration

Devil's Den Preserve, Weston

Sunday, June 2, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Weston artist Mark Mellor will do a watercolor landscape demonstration at the Den. Rain date: Sunday, June 8, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Hike for Sixth and Seventh Graders

Devil's Den Preserve, Weston

Sunday, June 2, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

This hike of four miles or less is the last special hike before summer vacation for middle-school-age students only. Wear appropriate shoes and bring a snack. Written parental permission is required on hold-harmless form, but advance telephone reservation is not necessary. Leaders: Lynn and Jack Medoff

Nature Photography with Alison

Wachstein, part one

Devil's Den, Weston

Monday, June 3, 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

First session in a three-part series for adults will take place in the photographer's home studio, where she will give a slide presentation and basic camera instruction on composition, lighting, and exposure to photograph nature and the figure in the landscape. Limit: 20 participants. Beginning photographers welcome. See also June 9 and 17.

Birding by Ear

Devil's Den Preserve, Weston

Saturday, June 8, 6:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Learn how to identify birds by their songs and calls. The leaves of the forest may make birds a challenge to spot, but Dr. Lise Hanners will provide some pointers. Bring binoculars and a bird book.

Workday

Katharine Ordway Preserve, Weston

Saturday, June 8, 9 a.m. to noon

This group will get the arboretum and trail ready for summer visitors.

Tree Identification Walk

Katharine Ordway Preserve, Weston

Saturday, June 8, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Arborist and Preserve Manager Fred Moore will talk about the trees and magnificent flowering laurel in the woods.

Nature Photography, part two

Devil's Den, Weston

Sunday, June 9, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Alison Wachstein will answer questions as photographers film subjects on location at the Den. See also June 17.

Laurel Walk, Devil's Den, Weston

Sunday, June 9, 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

At the height of laurel's blooming season, leaders Penny Kemp and June Myles will reveal all sorts of intriguing facts about the Connecticut State Flower and other items of interest.

Adult Walk

Katharine Ordway Preserve, Weston

Monday, June 10, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Our abundant laurel should be in full bloom. Leaders: Mary Callahan and Phyllis Kramer

Rambler to Ambler

Devil's Den Preserve, Weston

Saturday, June 15, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

This three-mile, moderately strenuous walk will parallel the Saugatuck River and climb some of the more narrow and rugged trails up into Ambler Gorge to view the stream, waterfall, and laurel-covered rocky cliffs.

Leaders: Penny Kemp and Cia Marion

Work Party, Great Pond, Glastonbury

Saturday, June 15, 8:30 a.m. to about 11 a.m.

Help with trail maintenance and installing fence posts. Please call Bill Reed at (860) 633-1674 for more information.

Nature Photography, part three

Devil's Den, Weston

Monday, June 17, 8 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

Return to the artist's studio to display the photographs you took at the Den and discuss ways to improve them during a shared, informal, and positive critique.

Saugatuck Valley Trails Day Hike,

New Milford, Devil's Den, Weston

Sunday, June 23, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Celebrate summer by hiking 10 miles along the reservoir trails with Bill Lyon of the Bridgeport Hydraulic Company and Den Natural History Guides Paula and Bob Eppinger. Learn about the local history and how Bridgeport Hydraulic manages its watershed lands. Call the Den office to register and find out where to meet.

Family Nature Walk, Devil's Den, Weston

Sunday, June 30, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Celebrate the beginning of school summer

vacation. Leaders: Marci Kendall and Howard Pierpont

Fern Mania

Devil's Den Preserve, Weston

Saturday, July 13, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Sue Roth will identify basic ferns and discuss their intriguing methods of reproduction. Bring a fern book and magnifying glass.

Tree Identification Hike

Sunny Valley, Bridgewater

Sunday, July 14, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Christine Balgooyen, a conservation biologist, will identify common trees.

Adult Walk

Devil's Den Preserve, Weston

Monday, July 15, 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Leaders: Leonard Horowitz and Helene Weatherill

Family Nature Walk

Devil's Den Preserve, Weston

Saturday, July 20, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Enjoy an inviting stroll by streams and pond. Leaders: Amy Beede and Paula and Bob Eppinger

Canoe the Housatonic

Sunny Valley Preserve, New Milford

Saturday, July 27, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Join Preserve Director Chris Wood and Protection Assistant Martha Rice to view Sunny Valley Preserve's Bridgewater land from a different perspective.

Insect Ecology, Devil's Den, Weston

Saturday, July 27, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Entomologist Dr. Henry Knizeski will teach you the basics of insect identification and talk about the biology of these abundant creatures. Bring a magnifying lens.

Thanks to Our Shade Trees

Devil's Den Preserve, Weston

Saturday, Aug. 3, 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

As they walk the trails, Leaders Mary Joy Leaper and Gabor Osvath will discuss the Den's shady friends and all the positive things they do for us.

Family Nature Walk

Devil's Den Preserve, Weston

Saturday, Aug. 10, 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Leaders: Jackie and Dick Troxell

Butterflies!

Katharine Ordway Preserve, Weston

Saturday, Aug. 17, 10 a.m. to noon

Lepidopterist Vic Demasi will discuss identifying butterflies and moths and the habitats and foods that can attract them to your own property.

Neleida Talavera's love of the outdoors and desire to make a contribution to the environment brought her to us just a little over one year ago. Since then, Neleida, who lives in Meriden, has attended every preserve work day we have offered, often using vacation days to do so, and has become a preserve monitor at three of our transferred preserves. Her dedication, enthusiasm, and energy make a great contribution to the chapter's volunteer program.

When Neleida decided to translate her passion for nature into actions, she sought out environmental organizations and offered to do whatever they needed. She started her search in the Yellow Pages, and after several calls to other organizations, found her way to the Conservancy. Neleida liked

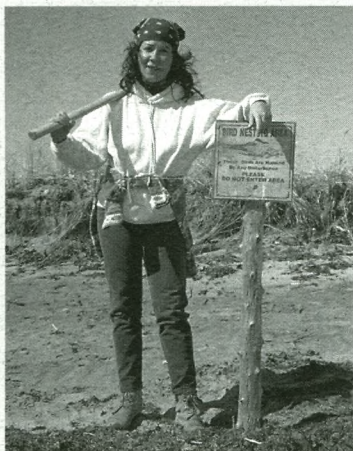
what she heard and decided to sign on.

What Neleida likes most about the Conservancy is having the opportunity to make a difference and to be out in the woods working side by side with others who care as much as she does. She looks forward to reconnecting with those people every year and revisiting the many beautiful Conservancy preserves statewide.

For the past 4 1/2 years, Neleida has been the training coordinator for Aetna Life and Casualty's Health Plan Training and Education, Career and Professional Development Program.

We look forward to working with Neleida again this year. She is a great person to be around! 🍀

— MARLENE KOPCHA



▲ Margot Booth, who worked as a preserve steward for The Nature Conservancy of Texas until early April, is Griswold Point Preserve monitor this summer. Her responsibilities include keeping track of the nesting piping plovers (*Charadrius melodus*) and least terns (*Sterna antillarum*), and educating visitors on the importance of respecting their nesting areas.

Give a gift membership!

- ☐ \$1,000 (Charter Oak Council)*
- ☐ \$100 (Acom)*
- ☐ \$50
- ☐ \$25

* Charter Oak Council and Acom members make one annual payment of \$1,000 or \$100 or more respectively. They are exempt from national membership dues and are invited to special events and trips.

Please make checks payable to The Nature Conservancy and mail to 55 High Street, Middletown, CT 06457-3788. Thank you!



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... when you could put it to work for The Nature Conservancy! Throughout your lifetime you have been saving for your golden years through IRA's, 401(k)'s and other retirement plans. But after your lifetime any funds remaining in these accounts may be taxed at very high rates. In some cases, combined estate, income and excise taxes could diminish up to 80 percent of your hard-earned dollars.

Consider naming the Conservancy as beneficiary of your retirement plans. Because the Conservancy is not subject to income and estate tax, you can maximize your support of our land protection efforts. For more information, please contact Carol Kimball, The Nature Conservancy, 55 High Street, Middletown CT 06457, (860) 344-0716.

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From The Land

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Stewardship Team Prepares for Season of Challenges

With every new preserve, a feeling of accomplishment ensues. Another success; another piece of land protected in perpetuity. In some cases, another piece of land becomes available for passive recreational activities and much needed respite in an increasingly demanding world, or provides an undisturbed home for rare species. Yet The Nature Conservancy's stewardship team has just begun its work.

Protecting a preserve in perpetuity also means managing stewardship challenges in perpetuity. Preserve management work includes a variety of challenges:

Boundary encroachment issues: bulldozer trespass; buildings erected on preserves.

Vandalism: graffiti painted on 100 square feet of rock near a waterfall; mountains of litter left on preserves, including hazardous waste, tires, car engines, and even a refrigerator complete with food and condiments.


Degradation of trails: erosion and other problems due to horse and motorbike traffic.

Unauthorized access issues, resulting in the need to install large, expensive gates during the past field season — more than ever before.

To meet these challenges, chapter stewards must work with neighboring landowners and form effective partnerships with land trusts and other conservation organizations. Staff must be skilled in everything from maintaining trails to dealing with a variety of personalities in potentially contentious situations.

In addition, maintaining a dedicated and enthusiastic volunteer force is vital. Having the necessary resources to juggle all these tasks is crucial and runs the gamut from having the right tools in excellent condition to having a vehicle that can withstand rigorous field work.

"Saving" the land certainly takes on new meaning in light of all this, and as the number of preserves continues to grow, the inevitable management challenges also grow. Connecticut's stewardship staff, with the help of dedicated volunteers who contribute time and knowledge as well as equipment, are rising to meet these challenges and protect the land — in perpetuity.

If you are interested in helping The Nature Conservancy's important work in Connecticut as a volunteer, please call chapter volunteer coordinator Jean Cox at (860) 344-0716. 

— MARLENE KOPCHA



From The Land

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